



# Improving engagement & student recruitment

**Shifting perceptions and enhancing pride through Upgrade Your Future**

UPGRADE  
YOUR  
FUTURE



BIRMINGHAM  
CITY  
University

**bcu.ac.uk**

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Director of Marketing and Communications

# Background



## BCU in 2010/11

- Clear strengths – innovative learning and teaching, outstanding student support underpinned by student engagement, excelling in professional practice, partnerships with industry, a ‘rising star’ for research
- Higher fees and a likely downturn in applications were on the horizon...



**studentacademicpartners**



| Winner of 2010 Times Higher Education Award  
for 'Outstanding Support for Students'

# Developing the campaign



## Secured buy-in and success through engagement



**Did you know?**

In this week's issue: countdown to Clearing, dissertation success for ELSS students and graduate launches new business.

Send us your stories and they could be featured. Please give at least two weeks notice if you are looking to get an article included.

**Preparations underway for Clearing**

This week heralds the start of the annual UCAS Clearing process, one of the busiest periods in the University calendar.

The University's Clearing hotline will be open from 8am on Thursday 16 August, with many students hoping to secure a place to commence their studies at the University in September 2012.

To support the Clearing process, the University has prepared a number of activities including a dedicated area on the [website](#), a Clearing [Open Day](#) and a nationwide marketing campaign to ensure that the University maintains a high profile during this crucial period. For more information on Clearing, visit [iCity](#).

A screenshot of the iCity website interface, specifically the 'Positioning Campaign' section. It shows a news item titled 'Positioning Campaign 2011' with a sub-headline 'Re-positioning the University'. The page includes a photograph of people working at desks, a sidebar with the text 'A SINGLE THOUGHT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD', and a search bar at the top.

- All aspects of the campaign were tested – from messaging and artwork to the strapline
- Kept staff informed of progress and campaign launch

# Developing the campaign



## A confident and clear identity

- Understood and capitalised on our strengths – from the market's perspective
- Developed key messages at University, Faculty, School & course level – repetition & consistency

**SUPPORT THAT GIVES YOU A HEAD START IN YOUR CAREER**

As a national leader for student engagement, we offer award-winning student support, work experience and mentoring before, during and after study. Are you up for the challenge?

THE AWARDS  
2010 | OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITY FOR STUDENTS  
AWARD WINNER

UPGRADE YOUR FUTURE

BIRMINGHAM CITY University

[bcu.ac.uk](http://bcu.ac.uk)

**GROW YOUR POTENTIAL WITH THOSE WHO PRACTISE WHAT THEY PREACH**

Learn from lecturers who come from and maintain their links with industry, on courses accredited by over 50 professional bodies. Are you up for the challenge?

THE AWARDS  
2010 | OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITY FOR STUDENTS  
AWARD WINNER

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# Campaign – messaging



## Key messages within Upgrade Your Future

- You don't have to go far – proximity of location for Midlands region only
- Excellent facilities & investing £180m
- Research with impact and practical solutions for business



# Campaign – messaging



## Key messages within Upgrade Your Future

- Outstanding student support and engagement
- Academic expertise – ‘in touch’ with industry & professions
- Employability – in top 30 for graduate level work, links with global brands Apple, CISCO, Cartier



# Campaign – platforms



## Regional and national routes to market

- TV/Outdoor advertising – positioning and profile
- Press/radio – call to action to Open Days/Clearing
- Online – positioning, profile and call to action



London  
Underground  
campaign  
during 2012  
Olympics



# What happened next?

Supports brand themes of: research with impact, leading professional practice, employability

# Living the brand



## Media champions

- Developed media champion JD and in-house training
- From news and events to expert comment, blogs and videos

BIRMINGHAM CITY University

VIEWS@BCU  
A PLACE FOR COMMENT BY OUR ACADEMICS

Can we have a 'proper' consultation for A-level reforms?

JANUARY 24, 2013 BY CHRIS DAVIES | LEAVE A COMMENT

By Professor Fiona Church, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Law and Social Sciences

The changes to the structure of A and AS level exams by the Secretary of State for Education, whilst not surprising to education professionals, were not welcomed. The notion that two years of study in a more limited range of subjects, followed by revision for an end of course examination leads to 'deep study' has been severely criticised by the teaching profession and a wide variety of groups including the CBI, teachers unions and think tanks such as Million +, all of whom feel there was no need for the change, calling it rushed and incoherent.



"How To' videos

Developing and improving the employability of our students and graduates is extremely important to us. While studying with us you will have the opportunity to access specialist one-to-one advice, careers management sessions and employment activities.

We have also produced a series of "How to..." videos that cover key aspects of kickstarting your career.

- Episode 1: Who are you, why does it matter  
Watch how students can create their own 'brand'
- Episode 2: Job searching skills  
Discover the methods that can help secure a job
- Episode 3: Job application skills  
Hints and tips on what your CV should include
- Episode 4: How to ace an interview  
Dos and don'ts and how to make yourself stand out
- Episode 5: Psychometrics Assessment Centres  
Why employers use tests to assess candidates
- Episode 6: Starting your graduate job  
Learn how to calm first-day nerves

Watch them all, or choose the episode you want from the video playlist:



Supports brand themes of:  
outstanding support,  
partnership &  
student experience

# Living the brand



## Student champions

- Since 2011, VC Welcome talks and senior staff presentations across all campuses featuring key messages of campaign
- 2013 – student ambassador partnered VC to share her own experiences & recruiting **30** ‘super’ ambassadors to deliver subject talks to schools/colleges

### *Personal Opportunities*

- Made presentations at Raise Conference in Sheffield
- Written a chapter for a book
- Been to the Vice-Chancellors conference
- Been a Course Rep for 3 years
- Met with M.P's like Vince Cable and Simon Hughes
- Been a Faculty Representative for 2 years
- Got interviewed for the UCAS website
- Been voted for Extra Mile awards
- Went to the Million Plus Conference at the Houses of Parliament
- Got a job as an Academic Mentor
- Ambassador for the University for Open days and School Visits
- Got a job as a mentor and won Mentor of the Year for the West Midlands

### *Emily Cooper - A bit about Me ...*

- G.C.S.E's →
  - 11 GCSE's
  - A\*-C
  - Needed 5 A\*-C to get into 6<sup>th</sup> Form
- A-Levels ←
  - 4 A-Levels
    - B - Psychology
    - B - Textiles
    - B - Theology
    - C - History
  - 3 A-Levels
    - B - Psychology
    - B - Textiles
    - C - Theology

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employability

# Living the brand



## Alumni champions

- Inaugural **Alumni of the Year** Awards presented in 2011

**Alumni of the Year**

2012 | 2011 | 2010 | Criteria | 2013 Nomination Form







Justo Casal, Mark Persard, Fei Liu, Kerry O'Coy and Rhidian Roberts were recognised as exceptional ambassadors for the University.

[Find out more about making a nomination](#)

- Partnered Careers Service to run the **Alumni Career Event (ACE)** series – **7** sessions in 11/12

- **Ask@BCU** mentoring scheme – alumni to students, expanded in 2013 alumni to alumni – almost **200** mentors

**Careers**

**ALUMNI CAREER EVENTS**

The Alumni Career Events series is back! This year we're offering even more sessions to support you with your career development and to provide you with opportunities to network with other graduates of the University. Whether you're looking for work, working for yourself, or just interested in developing your skills there will be a session for you!

Why not take this opportunity to further your career and make some new connections?

All Alumni Career Events are free for graduates, current and former staff, and final year students of the University to attend and include refreshments.

FUNDAMENTALS OF BUSINESS PLANNING	FREELANCING IN MEDIA AND OTHER CREATIVE INDUSTRIES	IMPROVING YOUR EMPLOYABILITY
Tuesday 20 November 2012, 4pm City North Campus	Wednesday 21 March 2013, 4pm City North Campus	Tuesday 22 May 2012, 4pm City South Campus
Get to know the basics of business planning and how to structure your business plan. You'll learn how to write a business plan that's right for you and your business idea. You'll also learn how to present your business plan effectively and successfully.	Discover the benefits of freelancing and how to succeed as a self-employed professional. Learn how to build a portfolio, market your services and charge for your work. You'll also learn how to manage your time effectively and deal with clients.	This session will be led by careers experts from the University who will help you develop your personal branding and marketing skills to help you succeed in your chosen career.
<a href="#">PRESENTING YOURSELF EFFECTIVELY</a>	<a href="#">PITCHING TO THE EXPERTS</a>	<a href="#">INTRODUCTION TO MENTORING</a>
Wednesday 28 November 2012, 4pm City North Campus	Wednesday 27 March 2013, 4pm City North Campus	Tuesday 21 May 2012, 4pm City South Campus
This workshop will teach you the skills to communicate effectively and professionally. You'll learn how to present yourself in a positive light and how to make a good impression. You'll also learn how to make a good impression when meeting new people and networking.	During the first hour of this session our expert will demonstrate the art of pitching your ideas to investors or clients. You'll then have the opportunity to pitch your own ideas to a panel of experts who will provide feedback on your presentation.	You will learn how to identify potential mentors and how to approach them. You'll also learn how to make the most of your mentorship experience and how to evaluate its effectiveness.

**Nov 28**

Ruth Flynn @Gifted\_Cards Enjoyed the @BCUAlumni #Presenting Yourself Effectively. Always good to brush up on your skills in business even if your a crafter! :) Expand

**Nov 29**

Fiona Cohn @Excel\_arate @Gifted\_Cards @BCUAlumni Thanks for the positive feedback. Glad you found it useful

[Hide conversation](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

Supports brand themes of:  
outstanding support,  
partnership &  
student experience

# Engagement

## Tell us 'your' story

- Made campaign relevant to staff & students through Tell Us Awards launched in 2011
- Outstanding student support & excellent teaching and learning
- New categories for 12/13 - recognise support staff & highlight PG students



**Shona McQuillan**

Shona has helped the University to develop a new system which has improved the way the University communicates with prospective students. Shona also provides support for prospective students, receiving praise from the mother of an applicant with Aspergers for her ability to go the 'extra mile' in helping her son.

[www.bcu.ac.uk/tellusyourstory](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/tellusyourstory)



**Jordan Pearman**

Jordan uses the academic skills gained from his postgraduate Art degree to help contribute to his community, working with local schools. He has also been commended for his cross-disciplinary work.



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# Engagement



## Student Communications

- Improved welcome website and developed 'Starting Out' videos
- To reduce the 'noise' launched online newsletter September 2012 – will be managed by students this year



**Noticeboard**  
**Face-to-face**  
Online video  
Printed magazine/newspaper  
Department intranet sites  
**Posters/Leaflets**  
Twitter  
Digital Display Screens  
Email  
Text Messaging  
Telephone

**Student Representative**

**Students' Union website**

**Virtual Learning Environment**

**University Website**

**Computer screens**

**University intranet**

**E-newsletter**

**Presentations**

**Blogs**

**Lecture shout**

**Facebook**

Supports brand themes of: outstanding support, partnership & student experience

# Engagement



## Social media

- Driving two-way conversations
- Use social media to listen, engage and push messages/rich content

Birmingham City University shared a link.  
26 September

Guess who's been tweeting about our student finance videos? Boy George! You can watch them here <http://itun.es/i6Dd7Qx> or on YouTube.

 Student Finance Guide 2012  
itunes  
Preview and download the podcast Student Finance Guide 2012 on iTunes. Read episode descriptions and customer reviews.



Stacey Watkins: After BCU I will...Reach for the stars!

facebook Search for people, places and things

Birmingham City University Photo Competition

ENTER OUR PHOTO COMPETITION ...for your chance to win £100 in Amazon vouchers up for grabs

UPGRADE YOUR FUTURE BIRMINGHAM CITY University bcu.ac.uk

Megg @meggcollins ugh up at half 6 tomorrow to go to the Birmingham city open day! Should be good though! #exciting #university #future  
Feb 22

Birmingham City Uni @MyBCU let us know what you think. #bcuopenday  
Feb 23

1 FAVORITE 2 RETWEETS 1 RETWEET 1 FAVORITE 1 RETWEET  
10:30 a.m. - Feb 23, 2013 · Details

Reply to @MyBCU @meggcollins

Megg @meggcollins @MyBCU loved it!  
Feb 23

22 hrs

sian casey @SianyCaseyx @MyBCU where my dreams were realised, 2 years on and I'm loving every second of Uni! #bcuopenday  
Retweeted by School of English and 1 other  
Feb 23

itsSuperStarSagaL @Sneekerphanatic It feels so weird to be in uni on a Saturday #bcuopenday  
from Birmingham, Birmingham  
Feb 23

# Has it worked?



## The results so far...

- Post-confirmation entered Clearing 2012 with a **1,200** shortfall – as of December 2012, just **100** short
- UCAS applications peaked in 2011 at **28,559** vs **18,854** back in 2008; down **-10%** in 2012, up **12%** for 2013 entry
- October Open Days had **4,446** prospective student visitors – up **14%** on 2011. Additional Open Day in February 2013 – **c1,000** prospective students

Kickstart your career

[It's National Student Employment Week - check out our daily videos. Day 1: Who are you, why does it matter?](#)

A small rectangular graphic with a dark blue header containing the text "Kickstart your career". Below this is a white area with a small thumbnail image of two people talking and a link to "National Student Employment Week".

# Has it worked?



BIRMINGHAM CITY  
University

## The results so far...

- Facebook likes from **3,000** in 2011 to **11,100** – we made **1,085** posts in 2011/12, of which **73%** were ‘liked’, **19%** commented on and **18%** shared
- @MyBCU Twitter followers have grown from **1,900** in 2011 to **8,529**
- Video series – Clearing, Kickstart your Career, Finance Guide, Starting Out – have had **14,000** views
- PR has generated **£6m AVE** since August 2012



*Thank you for  
listening  
Any questions?*

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